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Senate

The Senate met at 3:04 p.m. and was called to order by the Honorable TAMMY DUCKWORTH, a Senator from the State of Illinois.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

We praise You, O God, for the opportunity to serve You and country. May we refuse to boast about tomorrow, as we trust You completely to guide our steps.

Today, sustain our Senators in their legislative work of sowing and reaping. May they faithfully plant and water the seeds of truth, justice, and peace. Lord, give them the wisdom to cultivate the soil of debate with kindness and civility. Whatever they do, in word or deed, may they do all in and for Your honor.

And, Lord, we thank You for the legacy of our first President, George Washington. We pray in Your mighty Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mrs. MURRAY).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, February 27, 2023.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby

appoint the Honorable TAMMY DUCKWORTH, a Senator from the State of Illinois, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATTY MURRAY,
President pro tempore.

Ms. DUCKWORTH thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RESERVATION OF LEADERSHIP TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

READING OF WASHINGTON'S FAREWELL ADDRESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the Senate of January 24, 1901, as modified by the order of January 21, 2023, the Senator from Oklahoma, Mr. LANKFORD, will now read Washington's Farewell Address.

Mr. LANKFORD. In 1781, the Revolution had actually ended. The war had stopped. George Washington, then as the Commander in Chief of the Continental Army, continued to be able to stay on to be able to lead the Army until 1783, until the new government could be formed. In 1783, he came to Annapolis, MD, and Commander in Chief George Washington resigned his commission of the military.

Now, we don't see that as a significant event, but it is one of the most significant events at the beginning of our Nation because, in the past, if you led the Army and you won the war, you would become the leader based on the fact that the Army is behind you. That is the way it had always been in every place, in every country. If you had the Army, you have the power.

George Washington approached the civilian government in the beginnings of a new Republic, resigned his commission, and stepped back to being a private citizen. That event is so significant, John Trumbull, his painting

hangs in the Rotunda of the U.S. Capitol right now. That painting has been hanging there since 1824. In fact, the painting of George Washington resigning his commission is actually older than the dome that it is under.

We don't think about a military leader taking over the United States. That is unthinkable for us because of the path that George Washington laid down behind us.

He did a lot of firsts in a lot of his leadership. He was our first President. He was a civilian leader. After one term, he wanted to be able to step down. In fact, he and Madison actually wrote together a letter to be able to go out to the American people after his first Presidency, but so many people came to him and encouraged him to be able to run again that he relented and ran again. But at the end of his second term, he would not relent and had determined he was not a King, he was not the only person who could lead these new United States, but it was time, after 45 years, for him to step aside.

And this time, with the help of another gentleman whom he had worked with for a long time named Alexander Hamilton—they had served together, even since the Continental Army. He and Alexander Hamilton wrote an address to the American people. This was to be the end of his Presidency and of his public service. It was actually—interestingly enough, it is referred to as “George Washington's Farewell Address,” but he never actually spoke it. They wrote it, and then they published it together.

Many people don't know that George Washington didn't like speaking in public and wasn't akin to coming to make big public speeches. So they published it, and it became a signature.

This speech begins with a farewell to the Nation, saying: I am stepping aside as President of these United States. Then he goes on to be able to challenge the Nation in multiple areas, beginning with being careful in the days ahead.

• This “bullet” symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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